

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 01422 080110Z

70

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 068385

R 080050Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8023

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 1422

EXDIS

DEPT PASS CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT NZ

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER KIRK'S HEALTH

REF: WELLINGTON 1394

SUMMARY: IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE KIRK HAS HAD CORONARY
ATTACK. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER REFTEL WAS SENT, THE DOMINION OF MAY 6
CARRIED ARTICLE ON KIRK'S HEALTH WHICH MADE FOLLOWING
POINTS: (A) "HE IS SUFFERING FROM ACUTE PLEURISY";
(B) A STATEMENT FROM HIS OFFICE SAID A CLOT OF BLOOD
HAD SETTLED IN HIS RIGHT LUNG SOME TIME AFTER HIS DISCHARGE
FROM HOSPITAL: (C) HE HAS NOW BEEN AWAY FROM HIS OFFICE
FOR "FOUR WEEKS".

2. DCM DISCUSSED MATTER WITH HIS WIFE WHO IS A NEW
ZEALAND M.D. NO INQUIRIES HAVE BEEN MADE OUTSIDE
EMBASSY. HER VIEWS AND THOSE OF DCM FOLLOW:

A. KIRK IS 51, OVERWEIGHT (HE WEIGHS
ABOUT 250 LBS.), OVERWORKED, DRINKS TOO MUCH, AND WAS
GENERALLY NOT IN GOOD CONDITION WHEN HE ENTERED HOSPITAL.

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B. THE OPERATION PERFORMED WAS TO STRIP

VARICOSE VEINS IN BOTH LEGS. THIS OPERATION OFTEN RELEASES CLOTS AND, IN HIS CASE, HE HAD A PULMONARY EMBOLUS. THIS USUALLY OCCURS SHORTLY AFTER OPERATION. IT PROBABLY DID NOT OCCUR AFTER HE LEFT THE HOSPITAL. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE HE SUFFERED A MILD CORONARY. ALTHOUGH HE USUALLY WELCOMES VISITS BY THE MEDIA, HE WAS VERY ANXIOUS TO AVOID BEING PHOTOGRAPHED ON LEAVING HOSPITAL. NEVERTHELESS, A PHOTO OF HIM APPEARED IN PRESS AND HE LOOKED VERY BADLY.

C. IT IS UNCHARACTERISTIC OF HIM TO TAKE MEDICAL ADVICE AND GO OFF FOR A REST, BUT IN THIS CASE HE DID AND HAS NOT YET RETURNED TO FULL DUTY.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: COMMENT OF DEPARTMENT'S MEDICAL AUTHORITIES.
SELDEN

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CINCPAC FOR POLAD.

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 08 MAY 1974
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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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30 JUN 2005

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TAGS: PINT, NZ, (KIRK, NORMAN E)
To: STATE
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